[redacted]
Must Remain in
Transcription Room

M 1445

Saturday, August 10, 1968

Los Angeles

Question: That doesn't scare you?

MR. NYLAND: No, it takes much more than that. How many have we got tonite?

Answer: Four.....

MR. NYLAND: You know, it looks like San Francisco, but I'm afraid Los Angeles has to put up with it. I hope it's all right because I think it is necessary for any outsider not to speak, just sit and listen, because this is still Los Angeles group. And I'm terribly happy to be here and particularly to see in new surroundings. I think with Los Angeles we have gone through a little difficult period in the beginning, and it probably could not have been avoided. But I am happy that it is now in

a little better shape.

I think we ought to straighten out a few things. That is, whatever you now wish and whatever is now your work, Frank, remains for you, the leader, and as you know, Frank, and New York or the Barn are in very close contact with each other. And you also know that some other people will gradually take interest in what you are doing, like Bill from San Francisco and David from the Barn. And what I feel is needed for all of you, that is all of you of Los Angeles, to understand that you are part of a group of people divided into different sections here and there, most of them of course in New York, quite considerable number in San Francisco and Berkeley and such places, and here and there and the rest of the country. And that it is at the present time quite different from a couple of years ago when there was sporadically some interest. Interest now exists a great deal, and I think what is needed is for Los Angeles to know what is really work. And that you start more and more from the beginning if you can, among yourselves, to establish the principles of Work so that there need not be in a fairly small group any disagreement. And when there is no clarity, or rather when you feel that it has to be made necessary, that you talk and that you clarify issues, and that you have formulations which is the kind

of a language that you can use among yourselves and which also will be understood by others. And in that way you try to concentrate on building this as a kind of a nucleus because it will also develop here. You might say it's a sign of the times.

We had a meeting in San Francisco, quite surprisingly, 136 people. Some, of course, had come already; naturally, some of them were from San Francisco itself in the group. But there were quite a number of new people and some had never been to any groups before. It was a Group III, which is again beginning there. And as you know, Group III is the kind of a group which is a little bit a go-in-between, between the people who really want to find out more about Work and those who are on the outside and in the outside world, who are interested in finding some means by which they can be helped; or rather, that they in their ordinary life have a certain feeling that something else could exist which could help them to understand their life better and which at certain times can even help them to get a certain stability for themselves when they -- when they are in the outer world and affected by many conditions which at the present time are quite rampant in a more or less evil or sometimes degrading way; that there is something in them then with which they can counteract such affects.

And when one sees these kinds of growths of interest in Work because it exists of course in New York, it exists in Boston, it exists very much in Seattle at the present time, and one sees these interests, and to some extent even groping, of some people are quite honest and sincere, and some of them who have come to the realization in their life because of their own experiences that something else must exist that ought to help them, and that although they may have gone in different directions of philosophy and religions and that they have not found as yet enough of that kind of stability because there is not sufficiently aliveness in many of the dogma -- dogma institutions, that they then as an ordinary human being will want something that can help them in times when they are a little bit out of balance. The same kind of a thing will happen here. You will gradually get more people. And you have to prepare for it now so that when they do come, you are not going to lead them astray.

It is very important to understand that. That when you have a group, as small as it may be, that because of the fact that one is interested in these kind of ideas which have a value for persons in ordinary life but are of a different caliber, you have then opened up something or you have come in contact with something that is very important. And the attitude towards

this kind of possibility of a spiritual development is that you for yourself, in the first place, have an attitude, sometimes I call it awe. It is a respect for that with which you are then engaged, and that the place of this kind of a possible development and an evolution for man belongs to that what really is the most important part of his life, and that your attitude more and more should be one of reverence to the ideas as we know them through Gurdjieff or at least as they have been laid down in some form which is more or less understandable to us. And although it doesn't make any difference where they came from, and you might even say that they always have existed and, of course, you are quite right, they always have existed ever since man occurred on this Earth. But that they are now in some kind of a form which we can understand, I say, more or less, and that the emphasis in order to understand more of it and to understand it better should be, of course, in the application of that what is given as a method in your life to find out how to become conscious or what to do about the viewpoints which you now have and in what particular kind of category you will want to place all the different manifestations and the psychological aspects of yourself.

In the first place, you see what I feel is that you have to have that kind of a reverence about these ideas. I do not like to use the word sacred, but at the same time when I consider my own inner life and particularly when -- when I am quiet and I consider the value of my life and I see how my life is taken all the time by a variety of different things without my wish and that I cannot help it because I will constantly in an unconscious state keep on reacting to everything from the outside, and that what is an outside influence will take me, and I cannot control it because it goes; there is apparently that kind of an attraction from the outside, and there is a weakness on the part of myself that I cannot counteract such influences. And it is extremely difficult to keep to myself as I am without being soiled by the influences from other people or other conditions. It's quite logical that that is the case because we have never been brought up in any particular directions that we know what to do. All we have done in education and everything that we have learned as far as ordinary life is concerned, professionally and whatever is involved in it, is usually to apply the superficial kind of a knowledge in order to solve all the problems with which we are confronted. And that for us when we are honest and serious that

there are many problems which do not belong to the surface. And one says, yes, they have essential values, and you have a certain very definite place, more deep, further away from the periphery of one's life. And then I say, what can I do now to educate them, or to give them enough food, so that I actually could start to rely on them, and that there are not at times only flashes, perhaps of a memory and perhaps of something that is new to me, and in most cases something that I experience of what I do not understand the value really but I have quite definitely the knowledge that something is taking place in me when something essential is touched. And it's really a question then how to cope with that part of one's life. And it's really the emphasis on that part that starts to count, because the outside world, it's ephemeral, it disappears, it lasts sometimes only for a day. And certain sources are connected with the maintenance of one's self in daily life; they also are more or less solved. That is, you may have difficulties with them every once in a while, and you may not know exactly what to do or what to say, but after some time, conditions will change. You will change a little bit. You will make your adjustments. And as far as the depth of ordinary experiences are concerned, we spend ninety percent of our time in that way, and it doesn't matter so much which way it goes because we always

will make an adjustment. Even if one is poor, even when one is lonesome, even when one has worries, after some time, time will heal such wounds. And then the grass of forgetfulness will grow and I will not know, and sometimes I will not even remember.

But when one talks about one's inner life, of that what really counts, and then one is in contact with the possibility of development of exactly that, and that one almost can say, "Thank God, here is something that I can put my teeth in," and that I really wish because it will give me, and that I know for sure, it will give me a balance in my life," then it behooves me that I am regarding that, I say, in awe, also in fear, because I do not know what is going to happen. And when I approach it, I don't dare, if I have the right attitude, I don't dare to touch it, practically. You see, these kind of ideas that we talk about has to be put to -- they have to be put in the proper place of your life yourself. That is, as human beings and looking for something that is a solution for those particular problems which are deeper than the surface, you are then forced to consider the kind of food that you get. And when that food is actually helpful, that is, when you apply it and when you can verify that that what is claimed is actually so, and that you will know that it will give to you a certain

peace of your mind and a peace of your heart, of course. And that with that you gradually start to realize that it is important -- (I've said many times that I can never get rid of fire engines, and I think it's probably because I was born under a water sign.) When one considers these questions which are important to us because they furnish the possibility (of) further growth, as such, as essential questions of this kind of a contact under which we simply say we will -- we want to become conscious as a human being, that in itself is perhaps not so important, although quite logically it has to be extremely helpful to know what to do and the reasons why one should do it. But that what really counts is a conscience, and that because of this kind of work, there is a possibility of gradually developing a measuring stick, something with which you can judge about what is right for you, so that you know that you're no longer dependent on certain things that are just ordinary morality, but that in the place of this ordinary subjective ethical living in accordance with the rules which have been made by man, that something appears gradually in you which is not made by man. It may not be made by God because it is still questionable that we, in the way we are, and so completely unconscious as we are, that we as human beings are even entitled to have God look at us, if by God I mean that what is the highest that I can conceive of. And in order to over-

bridge that kind of a difficulty and still retain the proper attitude towards that what I hope for and what I honestly believe is possible for me, I simply say that that what is now for me God and represented for me as something that is of a higher kind and a higher level, that I don't decide how far removed that is. I do not wish to talk too much about infinity when I really don't know enough even about finite forms. But I do know a difference between lower and higher. And I also know that when I say I wish to develop and I wish in that development to become free from certain bondages which I now know exists on earth, and when I say I want to become as much as I can free from my own automatic manifestations, I know I have to go in a certain direction to be free, and that direction means away from that what I am. And then I hope that where I go to will be of more value for myself and for my essence.

And this is really the motivation of why one is interested in Work, because it will give me something that I cannot find by studying, and I cannot get it from teachers of an ordinary kind. And I cannot get it even from any kind of an idea that I may have myself, even if I say it is the purest I can think or much more pure than anything that I have ever created. I know well enough that whatever it is that I produce is still

tinted with something that belongs to the Earth and I'm so much all the time dependent on the forms it takes. And although I wish with all my heart that in such forms I could pour the essence of my life, I do not know even how to get hold of such essense, let alone the possibility of pouring it into a form, and that the trouble with us is all the time that we mistake the form for reality.

So I say when we are engaged in Work, and when we try now, quite honestly, to develop, and that the necessary step is the acquisition of a form of consciousness which, of course, has to be more absolute than it is now, and we say objective in order to indicate that it cannot be any longer a subjectivity because a subjectivity wherever it is and whichever way it is, beautiful or not, still binds me as subjectivity, because I am as a human being subjective, so how can I expect freedom from that what is exactly the same as I am? And therefore if this objectivity exists, and if it exists for me, and if I have a belief that by some way or other I can create, or I can in some way or other have the advantage of such creation to tell me and to help me and to give me at the proper time when I need it that exactly what I do need in the form of a light which clarifies the darkness in which I live. And in the form of heat which gives me the impetus to wish, and really wish, for my own welfare,

then I have to look at these kind of things as something that is completely out of this world. And for that reason, not knowing exactly what it is, I still have a feeling that something quite extraordinary happens to me.

I say this because so many times even regarding Gurdjieff and even regarding many other ideas which are presented by a variety of gurus, and particularly on the West Coast which is quite gullible for all kind of so-called idiotic statements more or less of a spiritual kind, that many times, that what is essentially correct, by publicity or otherwise, is simply dragged through the mud of our ordinary existence. And it is sometimes so hateful to see that that what is esoteric knowledge, perhaps even of the right kind, is simply offered for two dollars. And on the other hand, that that what is many times now used in the name of Gurdjieff, there are many people pretend that they do know, and that then because of their actions and the way they are, the way they behave, the way they talk, the way they act, the way they are as very ordinary human beings with all the different attributes of an ordinary man and sometimes a little bit more enlarged, that their vanity, their love for themselves, their jealousies, their idiotic statements which are unclear, always remain the same and still they try to tell you that the background of Gurdjieff, that these are the ideas,

Then you see I'm a little sorry because what has Gurdjieff really to do with them? And to what extent is it still possible, if Gurdjieff were a spirit, that he could return to Earth and destroy all such attempts? And I know what I am saying because in making these kind of statements, of course, I judge myself. And it means that whatever we do now and whenever we happen to talk about ideas and the interpretation of it or a clarification of what is meant by Work on oneself, what is meant by an objectivity, which must include at the same time through simultaneity, what understanding and the experience of a moment, that what is for me an impartial entity, That what I'm after is the creation of something that actually can be of help, because in its nature it must be different. I cannot use anything that belongs to the ordinary world even if it is lovely and beautiful, because it has no force for me. In ordinary life when I live and I experience this and that, I investigate many things, and I try to keep that what is most valuable, but will it actually prepare me for death? Will it help me during my lifetime to be able to have an attitude towards that what is now my physical body and which, of course, is used for the manifestations of that what I feel and what I think? That that I call a man as I am, is that for me sufficient.

to hold these kind of substances which I consider of a different kind of a value? And is there ever any possibility for me to create a form which can contain objectivity? If objectivity, if the creation of a little 'I', is in the image of God, how do I dare to take it on an ordinary level of life, and let everybody just look at it and parade with it and tell people even about it? Those who don't want to know, and by means of a little publicity try to earn a living.

You have to understand these questions for yourself first. You have to consider your life from that standpoint. And the question always is: what is it that you really want? What do you expect out of life if you consider your life valuable, if you consider that what makes you alive, of more value than anyone else's even if you are altruistic and even if you wish ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ well for someone else? That what you wish to protect, and, of course, you wish to protect all the time, is that what you are. If it is threatened, if it is in danger, if there is a possibility of losing so-called your life, because you may die, what attempts do you make to hold onto the life as you now know it? Even if one says it's unconscious, it is still precious. And now we talk about the possibility of using this life in order to create a different kind of a form which is more Godlike than what we

are used to on Earth. And it is a problem and it's a problem I have to face in fear and trembling because I do not know very much about what is objective, and I do not wish to know really of anything that is non-subjective, because I am not at home in it. And I don't live in my inner life sufficiently to be acquainted with it. And that therefore when the questions are asked of me what is it really that you wish, and I try to go down within myself to find out what is it that is there as my life that I now wish -- I wish to keep, I wish to grow up with, that I want to hold on to it, that at a certain time if I want to believe that, that I will ask, "What have you done?"; like in the Bible the question of the talents. What have you done with that what has been given to you?

And, of course, it poses many different questions because if I am just an ordinary human being and I find myself on Earth and I have to make a living and I have already different relationships which necessitate a certain form of responsibility, when I know that I am just not anybody, but that I know that there is some value in me, and that I wish maybe sometimes to show the rest of the world that I amount to something, or that I hope for a certain form of recognition, that then I face a problem for myself. How to maintain this life [redacted] so that out of this life, perhaps

when the body happens to die, that something can remain in existence. And if I say religiously that that what is my inner life and should be in contact with a higher force, that I actually can see the universe and all the different things in relation to each other which apparently are according to a certain law, I ask what is this law, and who is the lawgiver? And where is that, this kind of indication of such uniformity of existence, which apparently when I look and I study astronomy and I see constellations which are at the present time exactly the same as many thousands of years ago, I must come to the conclusion that there is something else? And although I may not be religiously inclined, there has to be something that is satisfying for me in my inner life. And then I say, if I wish to live there, then I need help because I have to be in contact with something, because that what I am, and that what I wish to be, and what I think my inner life represents, it is not there. This is really the first conclusion you must draw. What am I as I am on Earth? What is there in me as a man? I can be a nice man and I can help people; and, of course, I can work, I can work ordinary things. I need not even spare myself. I have obligations; I fulfill them. I earn some money. I pay my debts. I am nice to my friends and I help them. I am not so nice to enemies but

sometimes I can prevent myself from hating them. And still I'm at the end of a day and I look at that day, one day out of many like today. And you consider your life today. What happened to you today? Where were you? What did you do? What did you think? In what were you engaged? How deep did your life go? That is, that what is alive in you, how deep did it go towards the essence, for which is for you the source of all living? Is there in man something that he can consider the center of himself, assuming, of course, that that what are living cells of the body naturally have a certain form of life, in whatever form that I now that consider this life being there as living cells: living, that is, eating and multiplying and continuing to exist because somehow or other I know how to maintain them simply by eating and drinking and having impressions from the outside world? But you see, if I look at my day during this day, and any other day for that matter, and anytime that I make up my mind that tomorrow I am going to really live innerly, I do not do it and you know it. I can make a promise for that and then I forget. And when I don't do it and at the end of the day I consider it again, I have all kinds of lovely rationalizations because I cannot stand it that I didn't keep the promise to myself.

We talk about these questions of sincerity, these questions which have

to do with Work, because Work as a method will give you a means to establish for yourself a solidarity within, that on which you can build, which can be as a rock for you and not just drift sand or ballast in your head, nonsense and sawdust, but something that is absolutely genuine, something that really will give you at times that kind of solidity which you need, when you stand on. Almost I would say that at such a time you could feel at home. And then knowing that it exists, you will have the strength to Work from there because you can let then the past be whatever the past was. And you can extract from the past as much as you wish. And you can constantly keep on depositing to that solidity, but that which you must deposit has to have a value in itself of being nondestructible. It must have, if it is going to be permanent, it must have a value of eternity. If they are going to withstand all the destruction of finiteness, they have to have the principle of infinity. When you see this is the problem, how do I get it? And if I can get it, if I believe that it is possible for me, if I actually can hope that God at certain times might actually consider my existence, that if perhaps at certain times I hope that he will reach out a hand because I falter and I fall down, and I know I do fall down a thousand times and almost without being blamed, because God only knows, I don't

know anything. And again, what do I do? And then He takes my hand and I say, "Yes, here I am." And immediately when He takes my hand, I start walking, and it is very strange, I still walk my way.

How difficult it is to take that what is God's in one's own life. How difficult it is even to take anything from someone else as an order or suggestion or very kind advice and then to follow it at the expense of that what you think what is right for you. If you pause about that for some time at the end of the day, and I hope you don't fall asleep, that then you let go by and review your attitudes, your thoughts, your behavior of that day, and you try to look at it impartially. You try to compare it with ~~the~~ a value. What is that value today? What has it been? How much was there of a certain value that was not belonging to that day but it should belong to that what is your interior, your inner life? Not even to say God, because what is there in me to be able to determine or to define it? At most I can say it is the most lovely thing I can conceive of; it is the purest of any kind of a thought of myself. It is that on which I could rely forever and ever. It is that what is for me omniscient. And when I say it has strength, I say it is of strength which is always there and dependable, if I ask. But you see, these are just words because where

is the content of such words? Where is the experience for me of this term, omnipotence? I do not know it. I know there is something and I'm in -- in the presence of it, and I'm not at all sinful in that sense. And I'm quite willing to find out. And if that's the case, if you say, I want to find out and then someone tells you: All right, here it is. Now you don't have to find anymore. Here it is; here is your solution. Here is what you have to do, in very simple words, so that you can understand it, because even an ordinary person with a very ordinary mind can understand what is meant with the concept of awareness. One knows a little bit about it in ordinary life, and I've used the term 'being more alive to conditions,' for that what is really alerting me. And I'd say awareness is a special kind of alertness, because it means that that what I conceive of, that what I now observe -- we use that term -- that is what I become aware of as a result of observation has to be pure, pure as observation. It cannot be mixed. It should be by itself if it is a recording, stay by itself, without influence of any other kind of a thing that belongs to me also. And especially, I don't want to have any entry of a feeling, because I wish now to have my intellect and my feeling act by themselves without interference.

It is a very logical question I ask: why should my mind or my feeling constantly be at loggerheads and why don't they agree? Why is it when certain objects outside of me in my outer world, I have to make up my mind what to do and why is it that I'm not unified? I could say, of course, that is the result because I happen to be a human being on Earth. And, of course, it's begging the question because then I say why on Earth or what is Earth or what are the conditions that are created because Earth happens to be where it is? Of course, if Earth is subject to that kind of a condition, I become subject because I am a human being on Earth. And I'm bound to it. But why Earth, in the way it is, why not something else? And why does Gurdjieff call Earth unfortunate. But you see I don't even wish to know it because it's more than enough for me to state for me a condition which I know about of the conflicts, the disagreements, the impossibility of coming to a right conclusion which is affirmed both by my feeling and by what I call my thought process? You might say that this is one of the worst things for man, to experience that he is not at all complete, that he is not whole, that that what he is is heterogeneous, and it should be homogeneous. Because he is, if he actually could be, an 'I', all around and totally connected and unified as a man. And if I look at the conditions as I

know them at the end of a day, and I go through my experience of that day, I know I must come to the conclusion that that is not the case. And I am so far removed from it that I don't even know where this unity is when I all the time, although I say "I, I, I," that every time it's a different kind of a facet of myself, and that my reactions towards other people is very seldom the same and what they see of me looks as if it is all the time a different kind of a person, than only in a very general way that I have blond hair and blue eyes. But innerly what I am in my attitude towards others and when I talk to them, I don't even use the same language. When I look at them, I already have a prejudice or there is something that I know and I do like, and I associate it with certain things that I already have known, and where is my purity of observation? Because immediately when I see, with my eyes this time in an ordinary sense organ, then the five sense organs help my physical body to become aware of conditions as they are. And when I happen to think about the conditions in which I happen to be that then, of course, I draw conclusions. And when I now consider it at the end of the day of what I actually have been, and I look at myself then in retrospect and I try to consider what is the value of me, or to what extent have I been able to fulfill what even was a vow

ot at least a promise, or have I established for myself dependability, something that anybody could rely on, in what respect, and again I say one has to be honest, have I failed@

You understand when one talks about these kinds of questions something very essential comes to the foreground, that it is almost as if one doesn't dare to talk about it because much of this belongs, and in the beginning belongs very much, to one's private life. Then at the same time such private lives exist in all of us when there is a little beginning of something that you call a conscience. And although it is not very far developed and although it is influenced by the conditions of Earth of where I happen to live, and particularly when the conscience has to do with behavior, and I say there are the rules of ethics and the rules of a dogma that I don't understand, or a church that gives me rules to live in accordance with, and when I don't know what is meant, I go to the highest authority. And I say, What is in the Bible?" And I don't understand it. And what does the Pope say? And he doesn't say enough. And he leaves it to myself. In many cases, where will I go? Mohammed is dead long ago. The Upanishads, do I know with my Western mind what is meant by it? And I go to oracles and I try to find out wisdom. And I read books, of which there are too

many. And then I say, yes, in the olden days people did know, they talked about it and they put it in a mystical form. And I come in contact with Sufi or some other kind of a mystic, and I try to see what is Erasmus, and what is the Imitation of Christ of Thomas a' Kempis, and what is meant by the Zendavesta, and what does Rumi tell me in Persian, and all the variety of all the different things in the world and the literature and the knowledge in everything that does exist. And I wish to fill my mind in someway or other. And I want to have contact with it with my heart because, after all, I want to have that kind of an experience. And then I know I don't have time and I have to rely on something that is a resume', or perhaps even a digest, and even that I have no time for. And then I start to depend on what's in the newspaper condensed as a headline, and even that I cannot find time for all the time because I'm so busy. And then I rely on a little bit of a nonsensical magazine which tells me and chews for me so that I then can repeat whatever the opinion of the editor has been.

Where is man if he is actually a man, to be able to do under different conditions what ought to be done? And to what extent is he constantly dependent on someone else who tells him, and particularly when it is authority, and when it is somebody within the framework of which he has to continue to

live in order to stay out of the claws of the law. What is there in man that actually could develop if he wished to, if he only had a means, if he only knew how to get free from this what we call now the bondage of manifestations? Then I say when I have this and I know it, that I know that for sure that it's my condition, and all of a sudden then I say, "Here is Work." And I, in front of that, I have to think five times. Was that what I really wished in all my laments and all my claims that I could not this and that and I poor man suffering and I don't want to be unconscious, and all of a sudden the door is opened. And you say, "Get out" and "I don't dare," because I haven't even prepared to see what it is outside to live there. I've always lived within the confines of my own little home which I call my culture, my development, my manhood even. That's quite right because that's what Earth wants you to be, just stupid, so that you don't ask questions, so that you are a good sheep in the herd. And whatever the purpose is of being on Earth and whatever philosophy you want to believe in, in any event you're bound that way. And therefore when the truth is given to you, you don't even recognize that is something that is worthwhile. That is why I emphasize the attitude towards this Work, because if that isn't there, you don't even know what you are. And you don't even

know what you are. And you don't even know when you have been about, you don't even know that that what you claim is not the truth; that is, when you say that you want to do something, that you know something is needed, that you have a manifestation of certain kinds which must give you the motivation of getting out of it.

And someone then tells you here it is and you don't take it, then you're a liar. It has nothing to do with your inability to Work. That's an entirely different question, because I may try. I may not have the dexterity. I may not know how it is to walk on the road of objectivity. I may have many obstacles on that particular way, but my attitude has to be that I know that I'm in contact of something. It is like a light that is ahead of me and I wish to go towards it. And it eludes me all the time because it is not as yet that I can touch it and I am not allowed to understand what is meant by the Holy Writs. I'm not prepared for it. I've always considered this life as if it is something that would almost automatically would go over into an existence of Heaven, and that all I have to do is to die. And now I am confronted perhaps with something that is much worse, because I am not even prepared, and when I do die, what is there for me to continue to live in? And what do I do now when I know this?

Again, I don't believe it. If it was actuality that you believed in the value of objective Work, you see your attitude then would be to forget all about this life, and to sit quiet and to try to think and to try to not to think subjectively, and to try to think how can I make my thinking objective, how can I be as a man; if I honestly want to grow, what is it that I now must do, what is it that I have to find out in this life that prevents me? If I'm honest, I would not be able to do anything at all because I wouldn't know, and as I say, I wouldn't dare to get out of the cave of darkness into sunshine. This is the way I believe you have to look at it.

This is the way, if you honestly try to think of what the possibility of dying tomorrow, what would you do today? Of course, you cannot conceive of it. You don't believe in it. You have hope that you will wake up tomorrow morning, so, of course, why even consider the possibility of death? What I say just for the sake of an argument, if this is my last day on this Earth, how would I live? We have considered these questions many times in the time when Orage was alive, and we have spent a great deal of time considering it, and also at times we have lived in accordance with that idea. And I -- I will tell you honestly that you don't dare to move.

Because you honestly don't know what is of value, and you say, yes, I still want to do this and that and that and there are so many things you still want to do before you die, because you know you have been deficient, you have been delinquent. You have not been able to fulfill not even ordinary promises, and you do not know what to select, that is, at that time when it is the last day, is the most important part for you; because you haven't even thought about possibility of death, let alone how to spend your energy for the most valuable kind of a thing that is of use to you, and not to spend it on the things that you already know with your ordinary mind that are completely useless. And you continue and continue every day to waste time, energy, your health sometimes, all the different nonsense and repetition of what you have already said thousands of times before, and you keep on saying it because somehow or other, you are like a little talking machine which has to rattle off certain words in a form of a cliche, so that someone else perhaps can listen to it and say, "How admirable, how remarkable you are as a man." And somebody can say, "Yes, this is so beautiful, oh, and I love you." All of that, and you know it well enough, it stinks.

But you see, I'm not talking from the standpoint of what is Work.

I'm not talking from ordinary standpoint of ordinary life. Everything goes, a little bit high and a little bit low; a little bit better or a little bit worse; a little bit more money, a little bit less; a little bit wealth, a little bit poverty; a little bit of respect, a little bit of being put down as a nonentity. All these kinds of things in life, in relations with other people, how they look, what I like to look like, and what I think I am, what they think I am, and what I know they are and I know, and what they think they are and they don't know, and all the different things in ordinary life, I can adjust myself quite well. It doesn't matter anymore: someday go without bread; someday I eat too much, and then I sleep, and I get up and I'm groggy , and the next day I don't know, for some reason, I can't sleep, and at four o'clock in the morning I have to get out of bed. I know my stupidities. I don't talk about it, but I know them. I'm not such a fool; I'm really very wise. And therefore from that standpoint what I said a little while ago, that doesn't exist. Life on Earth is sometimes quite lovely and beautiful, and Mother Nature is also on my side of aesthetics. And even when I say I am so affected by it that I'm now going to faint because this kind of a moment of the sun striking the rocks and giving that kind of a shadow, and now I want to put that down for

eternity; for I will write a book so that everybody will know the answer to all the questions of life, so that then when it is read, everybody will be saying it and I, maybe, admired. Or do I withdraw? Can I give anonymously? And a day of my life that I now spent as if that what I have never done, I want to do because tomorrow there's no chance.

That is an entirely different question for me because then all the different things that I am now engaged in laid off by the wayside, one even says I cannot take them with me. It's nothing else but a little phrase. It is true when we start to think about it but I don't experience it at all, because I don't believe in it. I say I'm healthful, why should my heart fail me? If I am sufficiently clever, then I eat enough , and I do this and that, and nothing to excesses and no indulging, and nothing in particular, And I try not to fly off the handle, and only two cigarettes a day so that my lungs still can function. And all the rest of my physiological body I take care of and take a bath, and I do this and that. I have friends and we talk, and I play cards and poker and I earn a little money on the horses. You see, I'm only talking about that what is in general true. But when it is true in general, all of us know about it at a certain time. So it is not a question that all of us simply because of interest in the ideas of Gurdjieff are now dedicated to it, and that the day goes by and the seconds are being

ticked off off your watch, and every time you remember Gurdjieff, you know you're very far from it, and I don't think that you have to be twenty-four hours conscious. But you see it is an enormous difference between that kind of, I don't even call it an ideal state, but the state in which man is at the present time when just about one percent of the time of the day, and one percent of the talents he has, and one percent of his energies are devoted to the furthering of the existence of his inner life and his essence. And I even don't talk about that what is essentially himself because that is a door which will not be opened unless there is a reason why God wants us to look into that.

I hope that when you meet that there will be something of that kind of sincerity in your meeting, that the attitude is correct, that you want to find out and that you are respectful, that you treat statements about Work. I said a little while ago the difficulty is to remain exact, to remain honest, to remain true to Gurdjieff himself, to try to find out what is it that Gurdjieff said and not what Ouspensky or Orage or Daly King or any of the well-meaning people, of course, whatever they may have said, still it was said by them, as a result, most likely, and I hope, that there are a real experience and not only an intellectual pasttime. But

it is secondhand. And here is a book. Have you read it three times, all of you who claim to be interested in the ideas of Gurdjieff? And have you read it in accordance the rules as they are laid down also by Gurdjieff? Either you have belief in a man or it has no meaning whatsoever because if you just take what agrees with you, it has no value. If you try to find out what the Tarot cards mean for you when you only take the things that appeal or that more or less you can trace, and you forget about the rest, there is no value in even lying them on the table. If you think that the Earth is nothing else but sunshine because that's what you happen to see, and you go to bed when the sundisappears and it is dark and, of course, you're not conscious of it, so that your assumption is that the sun is always there as far as the Earth is concerned and nothing ever is in darkness, you know damn well you're a fool. So what is the good if that what you are and what you now become aware of, that some of the things you don't want to take because somehow or other you don't want to believe that they are true, and you cannot live with them because it's so difficult to assume. And there the facts staring you in the face when they become more and more objective, so that is actually what you are. You are at times mean in your thoughts. You are at times lazy in your wishes to do or not to do. You are constantly

excusing yourself in rationalizations which have no value whatsoever. And when one says deep down in my heart, I know it, that is the truth. It is deep down and you don't get there so often, and you close your eyes. If you know that the glass through which you look is colored, you admire it when it flatters your face, but you don't want it when there is something that is harmful for you or that perhaps someone else might have a judgment of you which you don't like, and you might appear different because I would almost say, for what,do you care about the opinion of other people?

That is why it is so necessary to have what I now have called solidity to be within that what you are, and that then whenever you may be affected by the conditions of life that you say, well, maybe they affect me that way on the periphery, but let me go down and have counsel with that what is my own reality. So I go down to that what is now the result of my past, and I hope it is solid enough so that I can stand on it. It may be a little shaky and my memory may not always be right, but gradually out of these attempts something starts to form in me. And then I also know this, that when my past is made up of different kind of facts which I've received by means of my brain or by means of my intuition, by means of certain forms of thought and certain forms of feeling, and that as a result of such, I have

acted and they now have become an experience of the past, and they are there in me, within me, stored away, I now go to my memory and I look at my memory, and some of the facts are not entirely clear. I'm a little shaky. And I know also that there are certain facts I don't want to look at anymore. And there are others that I have already embellished a little because they were not so favorable but I have explained it to myself that it was not my fault, and that for that reason such and such and this and that, and now I stand on it and I know there are certain what I simply call subjective facts. And now I compare it with something that when I am serious about my life that I now try to accumulate facts which are more reliable. I can almost say it's the least I can do.

The reason why I want absoluteness is because I am going further. I don't stop when I die. I don't stop now. I don't stop in the middle of this life on Earth. I keep on living and I keep on hoping to go further. So therefore the facts which are there now and when it turns out that they were a little shaky, not reliable enough, I say to myself I have to do something about that because how can I continue on this kind of a shaky foundation? If it is a question for me of building, I start with that what is foundation for me and I will make doubly sure that it goes enough into the

ground and that the frost will not affect it, and that I use a good mixture of cement, with enough cement and also enough sand, and enough water and enough mixed and well mixed so that it will touch all the bricks and the stones in all the crevices where the cement ought to go. I will pour cement in a form, if necessary. I will put stones in it in order to make it stronger, and with a stick I make sure that there are -- is no air in it anymore so that the wall becomes solid. This is what I wish of my past, and on that -- on that I want to stand.

And now I will add to it. To these kind of subjective facts which are already in my mind and then go to my memory, I will add a few objectivities, because that, I would almost say, I owe to myself. I owe to myself what is meant by becoming objective. If I hear about an objective fact, I say, "What for?" And someone will explain it is not for this life primarily, it is for you to continue to grow further. Then the question is, don't you want to grow? And you say, yes, I do want to grow; and you say why? I do not know why. Even that is truthful because maybe I don't know why I want to Work. I have sometimes a feeling that it is necessary because I do know that the condition which I am is not tolerable, not any longer. I must give up even with the variety of [redacted] different interests that I have when

I'm young, I cannot choose and I know that much. And a teenager is not so foolish either. He knows that certain things are more or less right. And he knows when there is just nothing else but a little bit. And therefore when I take now these facts and I put them together and, as I say, I try to stand on them, I find out, and this is an experience, that that what is absolute for me is much more stable. And it is so simple because absoluteness means when it is free from any kind of an interpretation, when it is a fact, when it is something I have to accept because it was that way, and it is that way, and it stays that way, and it will always be that way. Of course, when it becomes permanent, that is the material out of which I want to build a foundation. I say I owe it to myself but when I say that I mean really I owe it to my responsibility for my life. I owe it because unfortunately I happen to have heard about the possibility of an objective road. And when I am sufficiently grown up, I also know that such a road when it exists ought to be for me. But I may at times not as yet believe it is that, and I spend my time in a variety of little things, also very amusing and sometimes quite lovely, and sometimes it gives me a little satisfaction so that I can sit and be quiet and put myself a little bit more to sleep because there's too much to think about, and as a result, of

course, I don't think at all. And I take on the authority of so and so, and particularly when it is mysteriously placed, so that then I cansay it must be good because I don't understand it. And many times when I sit and I think and I pray and I think that I hear an answer, and then I am honest when I say, I am really a religious man.

But you see I don't want to face as yet and maybe for a long time that I have to do Work. I hope many times that it was going to be given to me, that just with a little bit of interest in reading and a little bit of attention that I paid to that, that then the things will flow over into me from my head. Of course, I assume they will become part of me. And they never will. They stay in your head, that's all. It won't help you to know what Confucius has said when you buy milk in the grocery store. I want, when I wish to live in life, I want something that is practical. I want something that can help me at any time when I really need it. When it is something that is available to me and I want to call on it and I want to find the word, I want that word to be in my mind. I don't want to wish to go home with that and said,"I'm sorry, I've forgotten it, but I will look it up; then to go to the encyclopedia and look it up and it says, "Yes." Where is the atmosphere of the time when I had a question? I cannot live during

the whole week and wait for Sunday to tell - - for someone to tell me then at such a time when I'm not at all affected by the conditions of ordinary life, when I'm not at all in a state of worry and a state of being emotionally involved, but when I sit quietly in church and there's a little of incense, some nice lamps and a little darkness and play the organ, and I'm more or less halfway already to sleep because it's so beautiful. And then I hear someone preach, and, of course, he means well. Then he uses words which are familiar and I say, "Yes, yes, yes, God is love; yes, I know I'm his child, yes, I know." Where is the experience of the whole week that when you get up in the morning, when you have to talk to your husband and wife, and there is difficulty, when you have to face the education of your children, when the sink is full of dishes, when there are things you have to do because you belong to the parents' association, when there are certain things you hate, when you do it because someone else is looking over your shoulder and it would be much more trouble if you don't do it, so you do it? Why should a man during such times not be entitled to know what is what and then to know what and how to do this or that?

So I say the reason for Work is the realization that you need it, and there is something in your ordinary life which confronts you and you do not

know the answer when you're honest. Every once in a while you will have a little salve on the wound and for the time being it heals and the skin is fine, and everything seems to be hunkydory. And your blood is still dirty; you haven't purified it. The kind of thoughts and the kind of feeling you have only at certain times are quite nice. And at times you even know how to pray and you hope that God will hear it, but you have no assurance of that kind, but it is satisfactory to put yourself in that kind of a state. But the blood of your emotions is still impure, because you still can be jealous. You still can hate more or less. You still have certain ideas that are translated from that what you feel. You still know that at times you feel things you should not feel. You know that many times you happen to feel and to think about affairs that are no concern whatsoever to you, and you meddle into affairs of someone else without them asking you. And whatever it is that you spend your time on and in what direction you use this beautiful precious energy of yours, and whenever you feel that now it is time at the end of the day really to think, and then all the events pass by and you retain your honesty, you wished you were asleep so that you didn't have to do that, and to let it go as soon as you can so that when you're asleep at least you may have a dream, but it won't disturb you so much unless it happens to become a nightmare for you.

For that reason Work is important because it will give you a clue to your existence. It will be possible by these simple means: impartiality as being the most important factor in this kind of Work; as the realization of an 'I' which is separate from you. When something that exists as if outside of you functioning objectively, that even when 'I' is there and is observing you, that you as a personality continues to exist in your subjective state in your thoughts and your feelings. And that after you have accumulated many facts which you might consider a little bit more assured or like rock or like absoluteness, that then with that in your ordinary mind considering it, you can then say, but these were impartial facts. And I now can base an impartial judgment as a result of the valuation, and such valuation I call to be critical about myself, and not to run away from that what I don't like, and to put far away any form of rationalization. When I say I accept myself as I am, I mean that what I am is that what I am and nothing else, and no further thought is necessary han only the statement of the fact that I am that. And when I can accept it, I reach in my mind a statement of nothing can be changed about that kind of a fact. I say that becomes absolute for me, because it is not only the fact that I would acknowledge but that everybody else would

acknowledge because the kind of research that I followed in reaching that kind of a statement is that I am completely impartial as far as the outcome is concerned. I take these facts for whatever they are when they happen to refer to me. And, of course, I am the object of such research. I'm at the other end of the telescope. I am being looked at by Beelzebub. I'm under the influence then of this little 'I'. And I also know I have to be reasonable, that that what I would wish for the future may not be as yet possible. And yet I say that the solution is there, that as a result of Work on oneself and the building of the possibility of gradually the reality of a consciousness which actually will know and which can be impartial, and that with the development of a conscience I will have the motivations for why I do things, and at the same time be able to place that what is needed as an activity in the light of good and evil for my Work, and that because of this kind of a conscience, I as an ordinary human being can find the proper place towards God. Because I'm emotionally affected when I have a conscience and I don't let anything go through when I'm not convinced that it is right for me to let it go through. My conscience is like Peter at the gate of Heaven. He will not let anyone go through that into Heaven and he would say "Heaven forbid ! You stay out,"

he says, when there is just a little spot on your conscience, "and go back to Earth and see that you can work it out in some way so that when you come, you are more pure and more real and more you."

I say these are the kinds of problems you face, of course, when you Work, and as a result of that, Work will give you something because you don't have to take it unless you have verified it for yourself. And when it's your experience, it is your own. It is not your Bible any longer. It is not the Holy Writ in some way or another, or the words of Enoch, or that what Buddha has said. It is your own. You don't have to depend any longer on any kind of an authority. That what is your own experience is even worth more than your God because your God doesn't have that reality as yet. And therefore I say when you now try to Work and you can uncover certain truths for yourself, and you know that there is really a value in trying to make attempts, and whenever these attempts are now made in such simple conditions, because how can you expose the little 'I' to conditions that are rough? The little 'I' is still that little child that has to be born almost, that is practically nonexistent. It may only be a little cell of something that you start to endow with the possibility of becoming like God and judging you in an impartial manner, that you say, "Here you, my little 'I', you record me now. Please do, because

it is my only hope."

But you also must notice in the beginning that the little child must crawl and cannot walk as yet and it has to grow up during a period, you know, and the little 'I' being so small, and then you think that already in the midst of all kinds of worrisome states, the little 'I' wants to stay. It only stays when it can, when you make it stay, when you Work. And it disappears when you don't Work. There is no reason for the little 'I' to hang around when you don't Work, because when you don't Work, you don't wish it. And the 'I' is only there when it is wished. But then even when it is there in principle, it is not full-grown. And you are in such sorry state that then you say, "Now, if only my 'I' were there, I would be through with it." Of course, in the first place the little 'I' is not there and it is not grown up and it couldn't even stand it. Even if it could observe you, it would leave because it would not wish to have anything to do with your constant unconscious state. All it is interested in is the fact of your existence as a potentiality, ultimately, to be conscious and a man. The little 'I' is not interested in the condition of which you are with all your hates and jealousies and your so-called loves. It doesn't even know that such things exist on Earth. God does not come

down to Earth. He sends his little archangels or big archangels, all knowing Algamatant, and he sends them down to straighten out the affairs where they may have gone wrong a little bit.

And so the little 'I' being of that same kind of a calibre, and the principle of life being it, has no interest in life as you live is, as all of live it, misform it, cover it up constantly, put it in a bottle and put a cork on it, and do not allow any fresh air to enter; and even when it is possible you bury your talents because you think it is safer instead of trying an investment in the direction of becoming objective. And then you blame the 'I' when it doesn't work, and then you blame Gurdjieff, and you in your impotence dare to say that this objectivity has no value. It is only because you don't know. It is only because you are stupid. And it is only because there is no stick-to-itiveness in you, or you already cover it because you are so conceited, and you are prejudiced. But when you even wish one ounce of your desire to go up, that when you then try in a very simple way under conditions in which there is a chance of success, your 'I' will be there. And you will receive information about yourself which you had never been able to believe that could exist. And then if you're honest, the beginning of your conscience has been started,

and from that time on you also will know that all you have to do is to continue to Work.

I talk about these kind of things in a form as if you have asked certain questions, as if that which we are discussing in your meetings, of course, always return or revolve around the same things: What will I do under such and such conditions when there are obstacles in the way? And how can I understand the situation of an 'I' and it, of consciousness and conscience relating in me towards a will of my own? How is it possible that I could ultimately become an individual out of that what I now call an unconscious personality? What is it that happens when the little 'I' grows up and when full-grown and mature has the ability to stand on its own feet, and then can be grateful to his father who has created him? And that then the 'I' takes the responsibility because it has two things: the beginning of a consciousness and the beginning of a conscience? When I say the beginning of a consciousness in 'I', it means that 'I' has learned how to observe truly impartially and simultaneously. And when I say it has the beginning of a conscience, it is because something in me, thanks to God's advice, has created a little 'I' with benevolence so that it won't forget where it came from, and that when it is full

grown and dares to take the responsibility on his own shoulders, that the first thought, or rather the conviction in this 'I' is that he has to return to settle the different affairs in connection with his birth; because 'I' remembers how it was born out of the thoughts and the feelings of which there were very few in a man in the midst of all kind of poverty of everything that belongs to a superficial world, of that what was born at the time in a stable under very poor conditions. But when it is actually born and it remembers then where it came from, then it is impelled, it is absolutely committed to return to the body, and then to do everything possible in participating in that what is the existence of the body as it is, unconscious as it may be. But then because of its higher quality of living and better understanding and actually its being as 'I', has a chance to make good that what was for the 'I' its own Karma, to belong to that what was my personality and to take my personality by hand and to tell it what to do, and how my mind as a whole can now change to become objective as a whole and how the conscience, how that what is located in my solar plexus, now has a different possibility of an existence of a real conscience for man, emotionally tinted and colored, and residing in one's heart. It is that what the 'I' will do. It is that what is meant

when I say I am God's child, because in that state when I am willing then to be affected by that what is higher, I become as if nothing under the influence of that what is All, and then I become everything.

This is re lly what is the meaning of my life that I build something on which I then can rely, and which then comes back and in the acceptance of myself as my past, this 'I' tells me how to build on the foundation which I have made preparing for the possibility of a Kesdjanian body. This is really again and again that what is underlying this kind of a philosophy. It is not just anything that you get out of a little book. It is not something that is put even as a cheap paper edition. It is something that is holy and it has hard covers and it has even a lock on the book, and it has a key, and there is a key somewhere hidden secretly for those who do not want to find. And for those who want to, who really look, no key is given than only go and open the book. And what appears to be the lock is not a lock. And what appears to be the hard covers is not hard at all. It turns beautifully and the pages are well written, and the words are clear, and the thoughts are there, and partly they are hidden but one reads and reads and reads, and then stops and thinks and thinks, and then meditates as to the meaning, and then uses the words in the

in the application of one's life. And then one returns to the book and there as a miracle is the secret revealed as that what is between the lines, and one never knew it because it was written in invisible ink, and through the process of the experience, one has discovered the chemical that will make that what is unseen visible.

I say that Work has to be this kind of a color for you. It think that it is right that I tell you how I feel about it. I think it is necessary that you, when you honestly wish to Work, consider Work of that kind of a sacred nature. And it does not mean that, you know well enough, that one walks around with a holy face, but all that is needed is that you have the proper attitude, and that whenever it may come up in any kind of a conversation with anybody who perhaps so-called thinks he knows a little bit , that then you have a right to say, "Shut up, what do you know about this kind of a philosophy? You never have heard about the depths of it, and you have not understood where it should be and how it has become part of me, and why I cherish it and wish it and carry it with me like a holy vase that I have in my hands, and it is fragile and I don't want your dirty words to break my vase." You see one looks at a person and you can say, "How sad you are that you don't even know about the

existence of your inner life." And at the same time you never can tell what it is that motivates you because when they are blind, why tell them how it would be if their eyes were open? But when there is the least little bit of an attempt that they make and their eyes start to whimper, full of sand still because it is so dirty, it is dirty from the toils of yesterday, then at such a time, noticing this, and perhaps if you wish becoming a little extrasensory perceptive because you're looking for life and you wish it to be in any form wherever it is to be set free, then maybe even you lean over backwards a little bit, and you tell, "Do you know?" And then you stop. And when the other has interest, he will say, "What?" And the way he will say, "What," on that will depend what you will continue with. If it is just, "Yes, what?" your answer is, "Ok, never mind." But when he says, "What," then you say, "I will tell you."

It is your Work that has to be not only in that kind of a condensed form, that kind of an emotional quality, that kind of a knowledge that you must have, that kind of preciousness with which you will carry it with you, but you have to know when to speak and when not to speak. You have to know and to be selective about who you think are capable and and mostly who you think are actually entitled. If you talk about Work,

you give away a gift of great price. You give away the elixir of life. You give away the secret of the philosopher's stone. You give away how to make gold out of ordinary things. You give away your own secret of how to change your unconscious personality into a conscious harmonious man. You give away, to tell, the secret how to reach the door, where it is and how then at such a time the key need not be there. And for that reason, many people will never believe you, because in ordinary life, all doors when they are locked need a key. And the paradox is that that what seems to be locked is not locked at all, but you will not know until you touch it and try to open it. Work is presented to anyone and as presented to you at times by your thoughts is like the mother hen outside with the chicken which is still in the egg. And the mother tries to describe how beautiful the Earth is and the sun how marvelous, and encourages the little chicken to peck the scale and come out. And the little chicken says, "But how will I know?" And the mother says, "Only by work on the scale."

When we hear the click of that kind of a thing, the one is over and the other, and it is the end of my talk. Excuse me for no questions but I do know that in all of this, all your questions are, and I also know that all of them are answered. Believe it or not. All you have to

do is to keep on thinking and feeling a little bit. And then when you come to yourself, that is the answer.

Goodnight, everybody.

trans: M. Matra

Typed Helen Boyd 3/76

proof Ruth Boyd 3/11/76